

Coming out
under a storm



Coming out under a storm by antisocial hottie

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Summary: After a complicated discussion that ended up with the flight of Will onto the forest, Mike found him beside the destroyed Castle Byers and both start talking about their deepest secrets. [Byler (Mike Wheeler x Will Byers)] [One-shot]

Coming out under a storm

Mike Wheeler and Eleven being together was not anything people close to them didn't expect. Anyone could anticipate the kiss they shared for the first time at the school dance, as well as the blooming love that started to grow stronger since this moment.

Although things got complicated later, they were a beautiful couple at the beginning of their relationship. Everyone told them that.

Well... Maybe not everyone. Hopper never liked the idea of his adoptive daughter being the girlfriend of Mike, but it was understandable coming from an old and outdated man like him.

There was another person, hidden between the smiles of everyone, who kept his true feelings toward the romance of his friends to himself. Nobody could ever guess how he really felt seeing the lovebirds kissing in public, and holding hands, and laughing, but even if he tried to stay neutral, his heart cried silently.

Will Byers always thought that he and Mike would be together forever and ever. However, he discovered soon that those dreams and fantasies about sharing a fun, warm and caring life with his best friend was a childish bullshit that would never become true.

In summertime, Mike was always making out with Eleven at her house. They would only see each other when Mike went with him, Max and Lucas to the cinema to watch a movie: just like a double date, but without the "double", because Will and Mike were both guys and it was weird seeing anything more than a friendship between two dudes.

It wasn't just weird. It was forbidden. Being openly queer in that small town lost between the woods of Indiana was the same as calling for insults, bullying and physic assaults.

However, that crude reality never stopped Will's inner desires of wanting something happening between him and his beloved best friend with girlfriend, Mike: everytime they sat a little appart from the real couple, Will would try to approach his hand to Mike's to

"accidentally" touch him. He would look sideways at him, counting in silence all the freckles that covered his face, and every time Mike would notice his constant staring, Will would return his gaze to the big screen, faking innocence one more time to hide his feelings.

His rejected, unnatural, freaky, vicious and perverse homosexual feelings that went beyond friendship or admiration.

Will though he was doing a good job hiding his true self from the others, but his chest hurt when the same Mike Wheeler who stole his heart a long time ago said to him in the middle of a fight that it wasn't his fault he didn't like girls.

He meant that literally? He knew that his childhood friend wasn't like the others? Or was he just referring to the hateful act of "growing up and get girlfriends"? At that moment, it wasn't important the significance he really used in his words, because it was more than enough to make Will Byers flee to the core of the forest, accompanied only by his bicycle and the stars hidden behind the storm.

Castle Byers was his destination. The place where all the things he liked rested, and the shelter where he felt safe.

But it wasn't like that anymore. Everything was a lie.

Will Byers was convinced that he was the stupidiest person in the world for believing in the words Mike said to him *that* night.

Going crazy together? That wasn't possible... Was it?

"Fuck everything... I'm so tired of this." Will hugged his knees while he sat down on the ground, letting the raindrops sliding down his skin while he tried to keep the dark thoughts in his head. "I've been an idiot all this entire time. Even after El and Mike started dating, I always had hope inside me... I'm too awful and dirty."

He closed his eyes. The storm was everywhere, and so the rain was: the forest that surrounded him was so loud for itself that he couldn't hear some footsteps approaching him.

When he raised his head, it was already too late: Mike Wheeler was

there, standing in front of him, and watching his huddled body with a sad expression.

"Will... What happened?"

He closed the distance between them and sat at his side. Will looked at his friend with a slightly shocked face, genuinely surprised to see that even if Mike was soaked from top to toe, he showed intentions of staying at his side no matter the weather.

However, when their eyes met, the unsure and shy Byers looked away.

"Nothing." answered with a fragile voice. "What are you doing here?"

"I went with Lucas to your house, but you weren't there, so I thought you would be here hiding. I knew I wasn't wrong, but Lucas didn't want to go with me because the storm is getting worse."

"And Lucas is right. You shouldn't made all this path alone."

"And you're the one saying that?" asked with an ironic voice. "I was worried about your security, moron."

Mike took off the raincoat he grabbed purposely to search for Will and covered the shoulders of his friend with it. Slightly blushed, the green eyes met again with the sea of freckles, wondering in a loop inside his head about the nature of those actions clearly fit for a love movie.

"I haven't gone faster because I was convinced that you would be inside the Castle Byers." Mike took another look to the destroyed place. "But it seems that I was wrong..."

"..."

"Will... What happened? I guess this mess is all my fault, isn't it?"

"...Not at all." he looked down. "Maybe a part of it is. But the other half is my responsability and I can't blame you for that."

He wasn't feeling really comfortable, and not just because of the rain:

he was unable to look at his friend's face without guilt taking over his mind.

"I'm sorry. I'm such a child: I've made a tantrum and you had to come to the woods running to find me."

"One of the times you were alone a demogorgon attacked you."

"You're right, but that's not going to happen again..." his voice broke when Mike's fingers covered up his pale hand with a gentle touching filled with kindness. Will couldn't return the gesture, but it wasn't necessary: the warm wet skin of Wheeler was enough to speed up his heartbeat.

Instead of that, he wanted to say his name, but nothing came out of his mouth.

"I'm the one who owes an apologize to you. I've been an asshole with you all this time: since I and Lucas started dating El and Max and Dustin went to the science campsite, you've been left aside, almost... Alone. And that's not right. We all were supposed to be a gang, but I feel like this summer everyone took a different direction from the others."

"And you realize it now?" he couldn't help but answer with a bit of irritation. That thing Mike was saying was something that Will himself noticed a couple of months ago.

"Yeah, I know, I'm a freaking dumbass. And I'm so sorry about that." his fingers got closer to Will's, provoking a goosebump to the last one. Byers looked confused at Mike's face, but he was avoiding visual contact while he made more intimate the hand-holding. "I never wanted to hurt you."

Will shrugged.

"You already did, so whatever."

"Are you still mad?"

Will answered the confused look of his friend with an annoyed gaze.

"What do you think? You ignore me for weeks, you say some horrible things and then you think that I will forgive you that easily?"

"I knew I had screwed up everything with the shit I've said before. So it's because of that, right?" Mike sighed. "You're angry with me because I said that we're growing up."

"..." Will remained in silence, without knowing what to answer to the spoken truth. Mike scratched his hair, visibly uncomfortable with the situation.

"And also... The thing that you don't like girls. It's not your fault, you know?" Byers opened his eyes after letting go a shocked breath. "Maybe it's just that the others want to grow up fast. I mean, people our age fall in love and that, but they usually don't date someone in a serious way that sooner."

"Oh, so you were meaning that way?"

"Yeah. What is the other way?" he arched his eyebrow.

Will blushed and shook his head.

"Nothing, it's nothing... Just nonsense."

"...Will... I'm not stupid."

"What?"

"You thought I was calling you a queer, don't you? Just like the bullies did all the time with you... And your dad." he muttered the last three last words.

"I-I didn't even thought about that like it." excused Will in a poorly way, and Mike's hand started to weight a lot on his.

"You did."

"I didn't."

"Don't lie, Will. I know you since we were three. Do you think I can't tell when you're lying?" even if Will was expecting a scolding or an

homophobic gesture typical of his bullies, Mike didn't even remove his fingers: in fact, he approached his face a little more to his friend's as if he wanted to make sure that Will would listen to him despite the strong dribbling of the raindrops. "I can know when are you lying, as well as when you are scared, ashamed, stressed, upset or feeling insecure. Or replaced."

"..." Will's mind was in blank. "...Then what do you expect from me to say, Mike?"

"The truth. I want to listen to your true worries, emotions, words and thoughts. But you should say this to someone you trust from the bottom of your heart. And if I was at that place some day on the past, I'm convinced that I'm not there anymore."

He was trying to hide the grief, but his words depicted a sorrowful pitch full of regrets and sadness.

"I don't deserve your secrets anymore."

"Wai- what? Why are you saying this?!"

"Because I've been a dick to you! And Jesus, I feel so, so, so guilty for ignoring you all this time!"

"You didn't ignore me that much! I mean, you did in some way, compared to before... But friendship works like this. It has its ups and downs, and we can't avoid it."

Will didn't notice it until that point, but Mike's hand was totally grabbing his with a trace of hopelessness: the gesture was impossible to ignore anymore, and Will, self-conscious, started to slowly interlace his fingers with Mike's.

They were silent about it, but they were totally hand-holding. Just like a couple.

"Mike, I want you to know that... Even if now I'm still angry at you, that doesn't mean that I will stop talking to you. I couldn't do that even if they pay me one million dollars." he smiled awkwardly. "You're my only confidence apart from my mom and my brother, and there are things I can't say to the family."

Mike smiled after him.

"Like what?"

"I don't know. A lot of trivial things, for sure. But those little secrets make a difference about you among the rest of the group." he caressed softly the waterproof fabric of the watercoat Mike gave to him. "Precisely, I was mad because I was worried that you maybe were the first who noticed that something is wrong about me. You always do it, after all: you've been looking after me for ages."

As if they had read each other mind, they both looked simultaneously at their united hands: Will blushed sweetly, and Mike bit his inferior lip nervous.

"You're not just my best friend, but also my first and my lifelong. You're my guardian, my confidant, my classmate and my partner at everything. You mean a lot of things to me. That's why... That's why I'm so annoyed with you right now."

The tension was growing up uncontrollably, and Will's gesture were the clear proof that he was playing with his Pandora's Box.

"Well... Neither Eleven said that amount of good things about me." meanwhile, Mike seemed to be also embarrassed with the situation.

Will looked down, shaking his head slightly and squeezing Mike's fingers.

"I can say it because I appreciate you. And so, I don't want you to say that you don't deserve listening to me."

"Okay, I will take back my words then. I'm worth of the great cleric Will the Wise." they both laughed in a low voice because of the comment. "Can I ask you then why did you considered that I called you a gay?"

Will was expecting that question after clarifying things with Mike, and instinctively felt a pression on his chest.

Was he prepared to lie again... To his best friend? His feelings were peeking over the edge of a dangerous vortex, and he didn't know if he could be able to control his emotions and tears if the conversation

touched a deep point.

"A lot of people did before. Because of my clothes or my personality, they always said to me that I was a faggot."

"Yeah, but they're not right. You know that you don't have to listen to people who enjoys insulting the others."

"I don't know... I..."

"Will, you're not gay, so you have to stop thinking about it. They're assholes who don't know a shit about you, and that's all."

Mike wasn't right there. Because Will was, in fact... Gay.

But how was he supposed to say that?

"You're wrong. That's not the solution. The problem is way bigger than you think."

"...Yeah. I guess it's not the same seeing than receiving. But even if it's hard, you can count on us becau-"

Will interrupted Mike with a heartbroken scream.

"They're right, Mike!"

"W... What?"

"The bullies! My father! They are all right about me!" he hanged his gaze while he tried to kept the tears inside his eyes. "I'm a poof!"

He finally said it, but he didn't felt any relief. Rather the opposite: his vocal choirds shooked without control, his hand started to sweat despite the cold rain and his pupils couldn't leave the ground.

He regreted coming out to Mike the second after he did it.

Mike Wheeler didn't react immediately. He blinked multiple times, looked at almost all directions, scratched his hair and his ear but never let go the hand of his beloved friend Will Byers.

"Don't say that." he opened his mouth after ten seconds of awkward

silence. "You're not a puff..."

"Yes I am."

"Liking boys doesn't make you a faggot."

Will looked at Mike's hand, and then raised his gaze unsure until their eyes met again: Wheeler was looking at him without hesitation, and their faces were so close that Byers could count all his freckles one per one.

"Liking boys doesn't make you a faggot." repeated Mike with a lower voice. "It doesn't have to be a bad thing... Does it?"

"Of course it's bad. No one likes people who aren't normal."

"The bullies and your dad are everyone? What about your mom, or Jonathan, or... Or me?"

While Mike stopped looking at his face directly, Will looked shyly his rosy cheek.

"You don't think of it as something bad?"

"No. I don't. Of course I don't." he sounded troubled with himself. "I don't feel anything changed between us after knowing that you are... Gay. We are still friends."

"Well, for me you don't sound like before."

"That's because... That's not your fault. Is just my own nonsense."

"A nonsense that has do to something with my preferences."

They didn't let go their hands not even at that moment.

"I don't blame you, Mike. It's okay. We don't have to keep being best friends if you feel uncomfortable with me now that you know my true identity." said Will. "I'm an homosexual, and you're a boy. I will understand it if you don't want to stay at my home again or if you don't want to sit with me at the cinema. I will understand everything, so you can let go of my hand now. I won't be mad at you for doing

it."

That was the critical moment. The instant where Mike would leave him alone and his tears would inevitably fall from his eyelids.

"And why should I want to let you go?"

But he didn't expect that reaction.

"...Every time you gave me a draw, you made me happy. I have all of them saved in a folder, you know?"

"All of them? But that's a lot..." Mike nodded.

"Yes, it is. But I don't care, because they're from you. They are precious to me, and so... You are." Will blushed intensely. "When they found your fake body, I was devastated. I thought you were dead, and... That was the hardest night of my life. Because you were the most important person in my life, and I never noticed it until everyone thought you committed suicide. I was... I was such a silly."

Mike sighed with difficulty, as if remembering those times were going to make him cry in front of his friend. Will rested his other hand on Mike's shoulder.

"Hey, Mike... It's alright... I'm alive."

"You are, but I thought you weren't. Do you know how I felt when I thought I would never be able to play another campaign with you? Do you know how lost I felt... And how many tears I cried that night? 'I will never forget the impotency and hopelessness they made me struggle with...' That's what I said to myself when you were finally safe. But look at what happened in the end: I forgot about you and about those feelings for my own convenience."

"Your convenience? I don't get what are you trying to say."

"I'm trying to say that my relationship with El was a lie from the beginning to the end."

"Wait... What?"

Will was lost.

"You pretended to be her boyfriend *all this time*?"

"No. We were really dating. But I didn't love her in a romantic way, you know? And I knew it since I kissed her on the snowball dance, but I always tried to hide it from everyone, even me. I thought I would be able to forget it once the months started to pass and after making out with El repeatedly, but it never happened. I always remembered the truth."

"...If you didn't love her, then why did you kiss her?" asked Will with a hurt voice. "I saw you doing it. Why did you start a useless lie like that? You have hurt many people."

Mike sighed. Will was saying the truth, and he was aware of it.

"Because I'm selfish. I knew it was a bad idea dragging Eleven to this, but I still did it because I'm fucking selfish."

"I still don't get why would faked that you loved your girlfriend was something useful for you."

"I wanted to convince myself that I was normal! Okay?! All I wanted to do was tearing apart my real feelings for you, get a girlfriend, being a common teenager and stop suffering!"

He was about to cry. Meanwhile, Will wanted to ask a lot of things, but before he could pronounce anything, Mike started shouting again.

"The night you disappeared I realized that I was in love with you, Will! And when everything returned to normal, my suspicions just got confirmed again and again everytime I talked to you! That's why when I saw you on the snowball dancing with that girl... Jesus, at that moment I knew I fucked up because I wanted to dance with you. But what else could I do more than encouraging you? What else could I do than watching you from the corner? I knew I had to get ridd off of my feelings and going for the easy path of life... Going out with Eleven. Because I was convinced that, no matter how close you and I were, you would never accept my true self."

"...But I was watching you too at the snowball." whispered Will. "Why

did you jumped into that conclusion, moron? You think that damaging our relationship was the only way to move forward? You're so dumb!"

Will grabbed the other hand of Mike, interlacing his fingers and looking him straight at the eyes.

"I... I also love you. You're so silly, but I liked you since a long time ago." confessed him with bravery.

"Repeat?"

"I love you! I can say it clear now, and I won't stop until you realize that I'm being serious!"

"Oh my God..." Mike muttered without stop looking at his friend face. "You're right. I'm a moron."

"And a selfish one." added while nodding.

"I am, unlike you. How can you be so selfless and patient?" asked him with admiration.

"Well, I tried to endure everything until I exploted today." Will shrugged.

"But how...? If you're really in love with me, I don't know how you tolerated this whole situation all this time. If I were you, I wouldn't have be able to act normal for a single day."

"Mike, my logic is the same as yours. I thought I would never have a romantic chance with you. That's why I always reminded in silence about my condition, my crush and my jealousy. I thought it would be suspicious or annoying if I insisted since the beggining."

"Man, you're awesome."

Will smiled faintly.

"Do you really like me? I mean... You're not lying to me or something like that, right?"

"Crap, no. I'm not going to lie anymore. I'm tired of it, and now I just hope that you're not going to get mad at me for breaking the most important rule of our friendship."

"I said multiple times that I wasn't going to fall in love. So, getting mad at you for lying would be hypocrite." he looked down. "Now I'm more worried about the others. We will have to tell this to them someday, haven't I What if they... Reject us or something?"

"Don't worry about it now."

Mike raised Will's chin and approached his mouth quickly to his lips, caressing them with a soft kindness and a clumsy determination.

Byers closed his eyes, melting on the ocean of feelings they both shared at that instant their bodies were closer than the usual, and even if he never kissed someone before, he tried to follow the gentle moves of Mike's tongue.

None of them knew exactly how many seconds did the kiss lasted: not much, probably, but it felt like a pleasant eternity for them.

"Mike..." a sweet smile appeared on Will's face. "That was my first."

"I would like to say the same, but I can't..." he scratched nervously his ear. "I can say it was my first with a boy."

"You sound so clumsy." Byers laughed, inducing Wheeler to do the same.

"C'mon, don't bother me now."

Even if they started to sound happier, it was too soon to breath with relief. Will gazed down, breathing in, and then fixed his eyes on Mike's freckles.

"...If we kissed and talked honestly about this, does this mean you won't return with Eleven?"

"...I don't think she wants to be in a relationship with me again. She refuses to speak with me, so we seem to be condemned to failure as a couple." explained Mike with a serene demeanor. "I shouldn't have

done this to her. She hardly understood love and emotions, and I made her my girlfriend when she wasn't even prepared for that. And I didn't even liked her *that way*, you know? I'm horrible."

"Don't worry, Mike." Will hugged his friend, supporting his head on his shoulder and patting his curly hair. "I don't blame you. You were between a rock and a hard place."

"Thank you, Will." Mike couldn't restrict his wish to cry and ended up sobbing while hugging Will. "You're the nicest person I ever met... Really, I am so sorry for everything."

Will smiled, and little tears appeared in his eyes.

"It's okay now, Mike. We can go crazy together, even if it's in secret... Because we're not alone anymore."

Hi! If you liked this story, you can also find it on my Tumblr (post/186730014851/byler-coming-out-under-a-storm) along with my other stories and give love there too :3 Love ya